



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING
Reclamation and Enforcement
Western Region Office
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202-3050



March 28, 2014

Dear Sir or Madam:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) FOR THE FOUR CORNERS POWER
PLANT AND NAVAJO MINE ENERGY PROJECT

This letter is to inform you that the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), Western Region, Denver, CO, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate potential environmental impacts from continued operation of the Four Corners Power Plant, rights-of-way renewals for associated transmission lines, renewal of the Navajo Mine Permit, and a proposed new mine permit area within the existing Navajo Mine Lease area.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), OSMRE and cooperating agencies evaluated the environmental impacts associated with the following Proposed Action:

- **Power Plant Lease Amendment** - Arizona Public Service proposes to extend operation of the Four Corners Power Plant to 2041 and has entered into a lease amendment with the Navajo Nation. Environmental impacts from this lease amendment are analyzed.
- **Energy Transmission Lines** - Transmission lines directly connected to the power plant and owned by Arizona Public Service and Public Service Company of New Mexico require rights-of-way renewals to continue operation. Environmental impacts from the renewal of rights-of-way permits are analyzed.
- **Navajo Mine Permit Renewal** - Navajo Transitional Energy Company (NTEC) proposes to continue operation of the Navajo Mine to fuel the power plant. Environmental impacts of the permit renewal are analyzed.

- **New Coal Mine Area** - NTEC also proposes to develop a new mine area, referred to as the Pinabete Permit area, within its existing Navajo Mine Lease to have sufficient coal to supply the power plant to 2041. Environmental impacts from the proposed mine area are analyzed.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to facilitate ongoing operation of the Four Corners Power Plant and Navajo Mine. The Proposed Action is needed to 1) provide long-term, reliable, uninterrupted electrical power to customers; 2) continue to provide coal to the Four Corners Power Plant; 3) continue operation of the transmission lines and related facilities that serve to transmit electrical energy from the Four Corners Power Plant; and 4) provide for tribal self-determination and promote tribal economic development.

The Proposed Action would comply with tribal trust responsibilities to support economic opportunities on Navajo Nation and Hopi tribal trust lands and to help provide for economic development of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe through lease and rights-of-way revenues, royalties, tribal taxes and jobs. The Draft EIS addresses the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of these connected actions at the Four Corners Power Plant, the proposed Pinabete Permit area, the existing Navajo Mine Permit area, and the transmission line rights-of-way renewals.

Cooperating agencies for the development of the EIS include the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, Navajo Nation, and Hopi Tribe.

Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and Endangered Species Act obligations will be accompanied by compliance with other applicable requirements of, without limitation, the Indian Business Site Leasing Act, the General Right-of-Way Act of 1948, the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and Executive Orders relating to Environmental Justice, Sacred Sites, and Tribal Consultation, and related laws and regulations.

The public is encouraged to submit written comments through May 27, 2014. OSMRE is holding nine open house public meetings to inform the public of the Proposed Action and give community

members an opportunity to submit written and oral comments on the Proposed Action, alternatives, and the analysis contained in the Draft EIS. Input from the public will be used to help OSMRE make a well-informed decision on the Proposed Action.

Members of the public may arrive at any time during each open house public meeting. The public meetings will be conducted in the same open-house style format used for the scoping meetings; there will not be a formal hearing. Project team members will be available to discuss the project, Proposed Action, and the findings presented in the Draft EIS. Navajo and Hopi interpreters will be present at the open house public meetings noted below. The open house public meeting schedule is as follows:

Hotevilla, AZ: - Hopi and Navajo interpreters available
Wednesday, April 30, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Hotevilla Village (Hotevilla Youth and Elderly Center),
Auditorium
1 Main St., Hotevilla, AZ 86030

Cortez, CO:

Thursday, May 1, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Montezuma-Cortez High School, The Commons Area
206 W. Seventh St., Cortez, CO 81321

Burnham, NM: - Navajo interpreters available

Friday, May 2, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Tiis Tsoh Sikaad (Burnham) Chapter House, Large Meeting Room
12 miles east of U.S. 491 on Navajo Route 5, and half-mile
south on Navajo Route 5080

Durango, CO:

Saturday, May 3, 2014, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Durango Community Recreation Center, The Peaks Room
2700 Main Ave., Durango, CO 81301

Farmington, NM:

Monday, May 5, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Farmington Civic Center, Exhibition Hall
200 W. Arrington St., Farmington, NM 87401

Shiprock, NM: - Navajo interpreters available

Tuesday, May 6, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Shiprock High School, Commons
Highway 64 W, Shiprock, NM 87420

Nenahnezad, NM: - Navajo interpreters available

Wednesday, May 7, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Nenahnezad Chapter House, Multipurpose Hall
County Road 6675, Navajo Route 365, Fruitland, NM 87416

Window Rock, AZ: - Navajo interpreters available
Thursday, May 8, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Navajo Nation Museum, Resource Room
Highway 264, Postal Loop Road, Window Rock, AZ 86515

Albuquerque, NM:

Friday, May 9, 2014, 5 to 8 p.m.

Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Silver and Turquoise Room
2401 12th St. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104

Regardless of whether you are able to participate in the open house public meetings, you may send written comments via postal mail, hand delivery, courier, or email to:

Mr. Marcelo Calle
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation & Enforcement,
Western Region Office
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202-3050
FCPPNavajoEnergyEIS@osmre.gov

All comments must be postmarked by the end of the comment period on **May 27, 2014**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

A CD-ROM of the Draft EIS is enclosed.

For more information, please visit the project website at <http://www.wrcc.osmre.gov/FCPPEIS.shtm> or call me at 303-293-5035.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Calle", written in a cursive style.

Marcelo Calle
EIS Coordinator

Enclosure: Electronic Copy (CD-ROM) of Four Corners Power Plant
and Navajo Mine Energy Project Draft EIS